



Written by [Michael Tennant](#) on March 12, 2018

Senator Rand Paul's Attacker Pleads Guilty

The left-wing neighbor who [attacked and injured Senator Rand Paul \(R-Ky.\)](#) last fall has pleaded guilty to a charge of assaulting a member of Congress.

Rene Boucher (shown, center), 59, a retired anesthesiologist who lives next door to Paul, entered the plea Friday in U.S. District Court in Bowling Green, Kentucky. He had agreed to plead guilty in January.

Boucher's plea agreement, consistent with his statements to police, says he attacked Paul over a property dispute, not a political one. The Louisville [Courier Journal](#) reported:



Paul was mowing his yard on Nov. 3, 2017, at his home in the Rivergreen gated community in Bowling Green when Boucher saw Paul stacking brush onto a pile near his property, according to court records.

Boucher had "had enough," ran downhill towards Paul — who was wearing headphones and only noticed Boucher at the last second — and tackled him.

It was a "property dispute that had finally boiled over," according to the plea agreement reached in January.

The disagreement, however, appears to have been quite one-sided. "In a previous statement," recounted the paper, "Doug Stafford, a senior adviser to Paul, said Paul and his family have not talked with his neighbor in roughly 10 years and that there was no dispute between the men."

The physical outcome of the altercation was also one-sided. Boucher seems to have emerged relatively unscathed while Paul was seriously injured. "It was sort of I guess a living hell for the first four or five weeks," the senator [told CBS' Face the Nation](#) in early January. "Couldn't get out of bed without assistance, six broken ribs, damage to my lungs, two bouts of pneumonia. It was really a tough go of it. But each day I feel a little bit better. This last month I've been doing better."

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"Boucher was originally charged at the state level by Kentucky State Police with fourth-degree assault, a Class A misdemeanor," wrote the *Courier Journal*. That would certainly seem to be the appropriate charge, but Congress has seen fit to treat attacks on its members as more serious than attacks on ordinary Americans, so the state charges against Boucher were dropped in favor of a federal felony charge of assaulting a member of Congress resulting in personal injury. (Such a law is arguably unconstitutional. In fact, physical attacks on members of Congress, which are as old as the Republic itself, didn't [become federal crimes](#) until 1971; likewise, attacks on the President and Vice President were only made federal felonies in 1965.)

The charge to which Boucher pleaded guilty carries a maximum sentence of 10 years in prison and a fine of up to \$250,000. Prosecutors have said they will seek a 21-month jail sentence and a fine.



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Boucher's attorney, Matthew Baker, told [CNN](#) the defense will "ask in general terms for mercy and leniency and hope the court will give it thoughtful consideration and consider a probated sentence."

Boucher was released on a \$25,000 unsecured bond and, according to Louisville television station [WLKY](#), was ordered "to have no contact with Paul or his family." Sentencing is tentatively scheduled for June 15.

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